### Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund Evaluation of a Proposal for the Development of a Tangible Structure, Facility or Educational Program

Project Number: 0606-8

Title: Ocean View Recreational Fishing Pier Date: August 9, 2006

The Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund is to be used solely for the purpose of conserving and enhancing finfish taken by recreational anglers, enforcing laws and regulations related to natural resource conservation, improving recreational fishing opportunities, administering the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament program, obtaining necessary data and conducting research for fisheries management, and creating or restoring habitat for species taken by recreational fishermen.

Code of Virginia, Section 28.2-302.3

#### A. Project Purpose

### 1. Does the project meet statutory guidelines for funding?

This project clearly meets funding guidelines as set forth in the Code of Virginia. The construction and operation of a "no-fee" community fishing pier fits squarely under statutory guidelines for "improving recreational fishing opportunities".

# 2. Does the project fulfill a real need and/or provide a substantial benefit to the saltwater recreational fishery?

The project clearly fulfills a need and provides a substantial benefit to recreational fishermen. Access for shorebound anglers is limited and shrinking due to private ownership and development of waterfront land. Providing shoreline access for less affluent saltwater fishermen fulfills a real need and is a priority for recreational fisheries. Similarly, programs that provide <u>ongoing</u> access to saltwater fishing to young people, especially less affluent young people, provide a substantial benefit to the saltwater fishery.

## 3. Does the project provide its main, or substantial, benefits to the saltwater recreational angler?

The main benefit of this proposal is improved access for saltwater recreational fishermen.

#### **B.** Project Analysis

#### 1. What are the project's strengths?

The main strength of this project is its location. The pier would be located at the East Ocean View recreation center. This center has ample land on Pretty Lake, which includes a baseball field, a playground, and a significant amount of additional "open-space" land with a large amount of water frontage, three small picnic shelters and grills, and numerous benches. There

ample parking at the recreation center. This is an ideal setting for the additional recreational amenity of a pier for recreational fishing and crabbing. Fishing is a natural addition to the family-oriented amenities offered in this park setting. The location on Pretty Lake is just west

the new bridge over Shore Drive on the north side of Pretty Lake. There should be ample numbers of panfish (spot, croaker, perch, pigfish, small red drum), crabs, and some trout and striped bass. The area surrounding the recreation center is mostly small homes, apartments and mobile homes. The amenities offered at the recreation center are within walking and biking distance of a substantial number of less-affluent families.

This is the second submittal of this project to the RFAB for funding. This peer reviewer raised several questions about the project as proposed in the first submittal, and most of these have been addressed in the current submission. The current proposal is simply to build a pier for public access, and the two ancillary proposals (for marine science and oyster restoration educational programs and for fishing workshops and tackle loaner programs – both of which were lacking in the kind of specificity and detail necessary for funding decisions) have been dropped from the request.

The City of Norfolk also has stated it has no plans to close the Community Center. This issue was raised in the last review in reference to this being "an area in transition". The development East Beach and of East Ocean View Ave. to the west of East Beach is well under way. The waterfront on Pretty Lake is proceeding in a similar fashion to E. Ocean View Ave., with the tear down of many existing structures and replacement with "high-end" homes. The character of this area will change during the next 10-12 years, and there may be some effort to close the community center if its usage does not mesh with the changing "character" of the neighborhood. The center seems to be in the long-term plans for the City of Norfolk.

The City of Norfolk has clearly signed on as a partner in this project. This commitment was lacking with the last proposal. The only party that has not signed on with a written commitment is Mr. Ed Clark, who must grant an easement to the City for access. The proposal states the City has an oral agreement with him, but a written agreement will be necessary for the project to move forward.

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The pier itself has been substantially redesigned and expanded since the first proposal. The pier is now proposed to extend into Pretty Lake for 130 feet reaching 10' to 12' of water (three times as long as the original proposal) and will have a 74-foot long "t-head" at the end. This expansion will benefit recreational fishermen. There will be two 120-foot long "legs" that extend to the "t-head" at the end of the pier. One leg will be used solely for recreational fishing and crabbing, and the other will be available for school projects, research, etc. and will have gated sections in the rail to allow for better access to the water. When the "research" leg is not actively in use by a school or other group, it will be available to fishermen. This "u-shaped" pier is a unique design for a fishing pier and will add to its cost, but it seems to accommodate multiple uses well. The benefit of this design to serve multiple uses should be weighed against the additional cost in analyzing this project. The City seems to recognize this issue and describes the project as an "L" shaped pier with an additional access walkway for educational projects and programs. The budget separates these items, which will facilitate analysis of each.

Notes to design submissions note the pier and walkways will be ADA compliant and will conform to the requirements of the "Design Handbook for Recreational Boating and Fishing Facilities".

The City of Norfolk has agreed by letter to accept future maintenance, upkeep and repair responsibilities for the pier.

#### 2. What are the project's weaknesses?

The only possible weakness is the building of an "educational" walkway as part of the overall project. The RFAB will have to weigh the benefit to recreational fisheries against the additional

cost to assess the value of this fishing pier "add-on". It certainly provides additional area for fishing when no programs are being conducted. Also, educational programs for children, whether related to oysters, marine grasses, shellfish or finfish, have benefits that accrue to recreational fisheries (even if they may not be direct benefits) by providing children with a vehicle to explore conservation, water quality and other marine projects in a "hands-on" setting.

#### C. Project Budget

Is the budget realistic and reasonable for 1) the size and type of project proposed;
the number of people likely to benefit; and, 3) the area benefiting from the project considering the area's number of saltwater fishermen and license sales?

Generally, the cost for this project appears to be reasonable. The budget is almost three times higher than the previous proposal, but the pier structure is three times the size. The preliminary design submissions and specifications provide sufficient detail to analyze the budget. Certainly, the construction of a "no-fee" recreational fishing pier open to public use at this site meets all three criteria

2. What is the local commitment to the project (cost sharing, future management and

### maintenance, in-kind commitments of personnel, etc.)?

The local commitment to the project meets MRFAB guidelines. MRFAB guidelines for "facility" projects (piers, ramps, structures, etc) calls for a 25% "hard" dollar match (cash and

or

direct construction costs) from the community/organization proposing the project. The City of Norfolk is committing \$75,000 in "hard" dollars to the project – 26% of the project funding. However, the City is proposing to pay 100% of cost of the "educational walkway" as part of its matching commitment; so, if the RFAB decides that this is should not be a part of the project, then the matching monies would need to be reevaluated.

# D. Provide an overall evaluation of the project, including a numerical ranking of the project on the "SCORE" scale provided.

The project is a good project for recreational fishermen and the Ocean View community. This reviewer believes the full project, including the "educational walkway", provides benefits to recreational fishermen and should be considered for funding.

SCORE (Circle One)	Poor		Fair				Good			Excellent		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(8)	9	10	